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ABSTRACT

Designed as a simple how-to guide, this revised handbook presents guidelines for setting up a church or synagogue library or revitalizing an existing one. The first section, "Begin with a Purpose," advocates preparing a statement of purpose. The second step, "Be Prepared," discusses the importance of the planning process. Section 3, "Obtain Approval," suggests ways to make sure the congregation approves of the library and supports it. The fourth, "Organize a Library Committee," provides the procedures to establish a library committee. "Staff the Library" examines how to find people to manage the library, acquire and maintain its collection, and to operate its services. Step 6, "Survey Your Assets," suggests how to gather existing materials, sort and store them, and how to review the collection and user requirements. The seventh, "Establish Basic Policies," gives examples of library policies. Step 8, "Develop Action Plans," provides the steps of the planning process. The ninth section, "Carry Out the Plan," provides suggestions for implementing the plan. Step 10, "Provide for Continuity," recommends preparing annual reports and plans. The final section, "Stretch Your Horizons," examines outreach possibilities with the community, congregational libraries, and professional librarians. A planning worksheet is appended. (JLB)

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CSLA Guide No. 1

ED 374 821

SETTING UP A LIBRARY

How to Begin or Begin Again

Ruth S. Smith

Second Revised Edition

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The Church and Synagogue Library Association was formed in 1967 to provide educational guidance in establishing and maintaining congregational library service.

The organization issues publications relating to this branch of librarianship, including *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, a bimonthly journal containing news and informative articles for members and subscribers.

Membership in the non profit association is open to all who are interested in church or synagogue libraries. Provision is made for membership in the name of an individual, church or synagogue, or institution. There also are affiliated, contributing and honorary membership categories.

For a brochure with further information, and a sample copy of the official journal, or to order any publications, write CSLA, P.O. Box 19357, Portland, Oregon 97280-0357. Phone: 503/244-6919. FAX: 503/977-3734.

SETTING UP A LIBRARY

How to Begin or Begin Again

Ruth S. Smith

CSLA Guide No. 1

Second Revised Edition

1994

A Church and Synagogue Library Association Publication
PO Box 19357 • Portland, Oregon • 97280-0357

About the Author

Ruth S. Smith brings years of professional experience in teaching church and synagogue librarianship to this publication. She was reference librarian for the U.S. Naval Reserves in Washington, D.C.; chief of reader services and manager of technical information services at the Institute for Defense Analyses, Washington, D.C. and Arlington, Virginia. She is a longtime member of the Library Committee, Bethesda United Methodist Church, Bethesda, Maryland, and former church librarian. She is a founder and first president of the Church and Synagogue Library Association. She has led workshops for more than thirty years and is author of several CSLA guides. She is the instructor for the University of Utah's correspondence course on church and synagogue librarianship and is a consultant in library and informational sciences in Bethesda where she resides with her husband.

Second Revised Edition

This edition is expanded and enlarged to incorporate material from *Running a Library: Managing the Congregation's Library with Care, Confidence, and Common Sense* (Seabury, 1982) now out of print.

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Setting Up a Library

To begin to set up a new library or revitalize an old one, this step-by-step procedure provides a plan of action based on the successful experience of other library directors and librarians.

To Ruth Sawyer

For a lifetime of service to libraries as

- Librarian of the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences at the University of Texas in Austin.

- Volunteer librarian at the University Avenue Church of Christ for 13 years where she organized the "Friends of the Library" book club and added a children's library.

- Member of the executive board of the Church and Synagogue Library Association and president 1983-84.

- General chair of the 1986 national conference of CSLA in Austin.

- The moving spirit behind the organization of the Austin area chapter of CSLA in 1979.

- Instructor for several years of the University of Utah correspondence course in church and synagogue librarianship.

The cost of printing this revised edition of CSLA Guide No. 1 was paid for by the Sawyer Memorial Fund established by the Austin Chapter who "thank our dear friend Ruth Sawyer and her devoted husband, Stanley, for countless hours of labor of love cheerfully given. They have left an enriched inspirational heritage to us all."

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Preface

When we first started our church library at Bethesda United Methodist Church, Bethesda, Maryland, over thirty-five years ago, there were no guidelines or road signs to tell us just how to go about it. We wrote for the church library manual issued by our denomination, which described a typical library and how to process materials. However, it did not tell us what a big jump it was from the first idea of a library to providing full fledged library services.

Although I was a professional librarian, the practical business of dealing with the people, obtaining funding, moving the collection from place to place, and developing a successful library for this congregation, had to be learned on the job.

My first discovery was that the nitty-gritty requirements of library management can be more fun if you approach them as elements in a game. All the challenges are there -- hazards, reversals, advances, or success -- to be avoided, accepted, or met head on. The better you know how to play the game, the better you are able to turn, even the reverses, to some advantage in achieving the ultimate goal of an effective library ministry.

Like any other game, library administration had rules:

•Know enough about your faith, the needs of the people to be served, and the programs.

•Learn how to operate within your own organization. Be business-like. Find out how to get things done.

• Establish basic policies for selection, accepting gifts, and overall use of the library.

• Become familiar with standard library practices, such as cataloging, circulating, and storing materials, to be able to teach others to help. As repetitive procedures are established, maintain a procedures manual.

• Plan ahead each year. Know what you want to accomplish. Be prepared to identify the costs (before budget time). Keep track of your progress.

• Be enthusiastic about the library and maintain a positive and optimistic approach no matter what.

This guide is intended to be useful to those who are just "beginning" as well as those who, each year, are "beginning again."

Ruth S. Smith

Setting Up a Library

Step 1: *Begin with a Purpose*

A statement of purpose is the foundation.

1. *Think about why*

   Why have a library service? For whom is the library intended? How will it (or does it) benefit the church/synagogue? Individuals? What is (or will be) its relationship to the larger community?

2. *Put it in writing*

   Develop a statement of purpose. If you have an existing library, review, revise or re-affirm its purpose. The statement should be broad enough to encompass all you hope to achieve, but not limited to saying how it will be done. Examples:

   Church: The purpose of the library is to support the mission of the church, to undergird the teaching, preaching, and evangelistic efforts, and to help individuals develop an understanding of the faith and their full potential as children of God and workers in God's kingdom.

   Synagogue: The Temple Library was established to provide a well-rounded collection of resources on Judaism and the Jewish way of life for the adult members of the congregation.

Step 2: *Be Prepared*

Prepare yourself for the task ahead.

1. *Know your faith*

   Be familiar with the tenets of your faith and make that the foundation for your library's mission.

2. *Become familiar with programs*

   Learn about the major work areas and other activities of the congregation. Talk with the leaders. Visualize the scope and types of resources that might be needed to support these programs.

3. *Learn about libraries*

   Visit other libraries. Talk with other librarians. Get a feel for what it means to run a library. Obtain some of the "how-to manuals." (See inside back cover for list of CSLA publications) Become familiar with the requirements of a library, such as financing; locating and equipping; selecting, classifying, and cataloging the resources; and managing day-to-day services.

Step 3: *Obtain Approval*

Make sure the congregation approves of a library in the church or synagogue and is willing to support it. Existing libraries need to reaffirm this, from time to time.

1. *Round up support*

Learn the organizational structure of your church/synagogue.
- What are the channels for action?
- Who are the key people in positions to make things happen?

Take the initiative.
- Talk first with the minister/pastor/priest/rabbi. Make sure he/she approves of a congregational library.
- Talk with lay leaders or officers of the church/synagogue. Use your enthusiasm to gain cooperation and support.

2. *Request formal approval*

Present the idea to the governing body of the church/synagogue, or to the board responsible for education. Get official approval to establish a library.

If the governing body requests additional information (such as a detailed plan and costs), ask for approval of the concept and agree to provide a plan with any request for funding.

3. *Solicit funding*

Ask the governing body for start-up funds. A minimal amount will purchase supplies for cataloging and circulating materials. Also request that the library be included in next year's budget. The detailed plan you promised to provide will identify the amount needed each year. (*See Step 8*)

If official funding is not forthcoming, ask the congregation for gifts. Suggest specific books and other resource materials that the library would like to have. Some libraries find that groups, such as the women's society, are willing to help with funds.
(Refer to CSLA Guide No. 13)

Step 4: *Organize a Library Committee*

A library committee helps establish policies, develops library plans, and communicates with the congregation to assure continuing support.

1. *Name a chairperson*

Contact the chair of the official group to which the library committee will report and arrange to be on the agenda of the next meeting to tell about the library and its mission.
- Request that a chairperson be appointed to head up a library committee.
- Explain that the library committee will be responsible for developing long-range plans and establishing policies on finances, selection of materials, rules for use, etc.
- Be prepared to explain how a library in the church/synagogue differs from a public library. For example, the resource materials are available when and where they are needed.

2. *Recruit Library Committee members*

Meet with the chairs of the work areas and groups in your congregation. Ask each to appoint a representative to serve on the library committee.

Invite a few other knowledgeable persons from the congregation to serve as members at-large. Since library committee members often serve as helpers on the library staff, a variety of talents will be needed to achieve your goals.

3. *Assemble the Library Committee*

Set the date, time, and place for a first meeting. Notify all members.
- Prepare a tentative agenda.
- Get the committee started on establishing basic policies and developing an action plan for first-year needs. This might encompass location and equipment, financing, book selection, cataloging, circulation, staffing, and promotion.

Refer to *CSLA Guide No. 6: Standards for Church and Synagogue Libraries* and *CSLA Guide No. 9: A Policy and Procedure Manual for Church and Synagogue Libraries* for things that need to be considered.

Note: All the remaining steps are meant for the library committee.

Step 5: *Staff the Library*

Determine who will manage the library, acquire and maintain its resources and operate its services.

1. *Establish responsibilities*

   Write a job description for the librarian. List the duties and responsibilities assigned. Review it from time to time. You may wish to amend it as current situations require.

2. *Appoint the librarian*

   Name a librarian. Make sure the person named accepts the written responsibilities.

3. *Develop a procedures manual*

   Begin, and keep up to date, a procedures manual for repetitive library operations. This will promote consistency and help train volunteer assistants when they are assigned tasks.

4. *Recruit staff*

   In smaller libraries, the librarian can handle all the tasks. As the library grows, assistants will be needed. Recruit helpers for specific tasks.

5. *Provide staff training*

   Provide adequate orientation for new volunteers. Introduce them to the library, where things are located, and general procedures. Acquaint them with the procedures manual mentioned above.

   • *Assign a buddy.* Ask a knowledgeable co-worker to work with the new recruit (if your staff is large enough). Let them work as a team until the new worker can operate effectively alone.

   • *Workshops.* Inquire about workshops for congregational librarians. Write your denominational headquarters. Inquire at your local Council of Churches. Ask at the public library.

   • *Conferences.* Encourage attendance at library conferences. The Church and Synagogue Library Association holds an annual conference where training sessions are offered, led by nationally known persons in the congregational library field. CSLA chapters hold regional and local workshops throughout the country. National conferences also are held by other library associations.

   • *Correspondence course.* Take the University of Utah correspondence study course on church and synagogue librarianship. At the conclusion of the class, the student opting to take the final exam receives a Certificate of Completion and two continuing education credits. A student choosing not to take the final exam, receives a Certificate of Completion. Write: University of Utah, Correspondence Study, Division of Continuing Education, 2180 Annex Building, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112. Call 1-800-INSTUDY for more information.

Step 6: *Survey Your Assets*

Few worthwhile programs just happen. Teamwork and a lot of advance planning are needed to make a project run smoothly. Whether you are starting a new library or re-vitalizing an existing one, the following steps are suggestions for getting things done.

1. *Gather resource materials*

   If you are "beginning" a library, gather the resource materials that the church/ synagogue already owns. More than likely books, pamphlets, pictures, filmstrips, records, etc. have been purchased for various programs over a period of years. Look for these materials in classroom closets or lying about in the meeting rooms. (Be sure to coordinate with the teaching staff).

2. *Sort the materials*

   Set aside all items that are still in good usable condition.

3. *Store the collection temporarily*

   After the library committee has established the selection policy (*see next step*), materials which satisfy the selection guidelines will be cataloged for use.

4. *Review what you have*

   At least annually, review the library's collection. Evaluate what you have, what needs to be withdrawn, and what needs to be acquired for a basic, well-rounded collection.

5. *Review user requirements*

   Review requirements of the congregation. Needs change. Determine what resources and library services currently are really wanted and needed. Try distributing a questionnaire to the ministerial staff, teachers, other leaders, and general readers of the congregation. Analyze how well the library is able to respond to these requirements. This helps in planning future acquisitions and services.

Step 7: *Establish Basic Policies*

Library policies are the stepping stones. They, along with the policy statement, provide guidance for all other action.

1. *Who may use the library*

   Some libraries like to include this policy as an extension of the purpose statement. Example:

   ... by providing library services, such as multi-media resource materials, for the entire congregation (children, youth, and adults) as well as the broader neighborhood community, within limits established by the Library Committee.

2. *Library hours and rules for use*

   Establish hours the library will be "open" and how material may be borrowed (and by whom). Post the hours and have rules visible to all users.

3. *Resource selection*

   Your policy for resource selection should reflect the needs and interests of the congregation. A selection policy (in writing) provides guidelines for collection development and provides protection against becoming a "dumping ground" for unwanted donations.

4. *Accepting gifts*

   A specific policy for accepting gifts is useful. An example: Gift books that are not needed for the library collection will be passed along to another library or set aside for the annual used book sale.

5. *Circulation*

   Set a standard loan period for materials that circulate. Consider a measure of flexibility for books borrowed during vacations (longer period) or during seasons such as Lent and Christmas (shorter period).

Step 8: *Develop Action Plans*

Plans are the building blocks. They identify what needs to be done in the coming year, who will do it and when, and how much will it cost.

1. *Establish goals*

   Goals identify what you plan to do, but not necessarily how. Examples:

   Goal 1: Locate and equip the library for maximum use.

   Goal 2: Select and acquire resources wanted/needed by the people and programs of the congregation.

   Goal 3: Catalog and maintain the collection so it is relevant, attractive, and easily accessible.

   Goal 4: Operate the library/services efficiently and effectively.

   Goal 5: Develop staff to manage the library and its services adequately.

   Goal 6: Promote the library, its resources and services to encourage use.

2. *Identify action objectives*

   To begin: Identify specific objectives (strategies to achieve the goals). Objectives contain an action verb, are measurable, and have a timetable for completion. They also assign responsibilities. Several objectives (or strategies) might be planned for each goal. Each can be divided into smaller tasks, and these into smaller ones. Identify everything that needs to be done. Examples:

   Goal 1: Locate and equip ...

   Objective 1: Convert the adjoining room into a special resource center for children, within five years. (Responsibility: Library Committee)

   Goal 2: Select and acquire ...

   Objective 1: Develop a circulating videotape collection within three years. (Responsibility: Assistant librarian)

   Goal 3: Catalog and maintain ...

   Objective 1: Convert the manual card catalog to a computerized online catalog, by _____. (Responsibility: Cataloger)

Goal 4: Operate ...

Objective 1: Develop a procedures manual in writing before September _____. (Responsibility: Librarian)

Goal 5: Develop staff ...

Objective 1: Recruit and train at least one new helper before the end of the year. (Responsibility: Librarian)

3. *Define specific actions*

Smaller tasks are easier to assign to helpers. Due dates keep everyone on track.

Try a brainstorming session with the library committee and other interested persons to help you develop action plans. Some action plans cover more than one year, so dream big. How to stretch the costs over a period of time will be discussed later.

With a well defined plan, everyone can follow the same blueprint. Like a good cooking recipe, a good plan makes sure that no small ingredient is left out and that things will be done in the proper order to achieve the desired results.

Examples:

Goal 6: Promote ...

Objective 1: Announce all new library resources during the month they are acquired. (Responsibility: Assistant librarian)

Action 1: Post a list of new books in the Fellowship Hall each week. (Rene McDonald)
Action 2: Place new books in the "New Book" display, as soon as they are ready for circulation. (Susan Hunt)

Objective 2: Place a book truck in the narthex and circulate books from there before and after worship services each Sunday. (Responsibility: Librarian)

4. *Establish priorities*

Although everything in the plan needs to be done, normally it cannot all be done at once. Some actions are more important than others. Some must be done before others can be achieved.

Assign a priority to all elements of the plan. This identifies what needs to be done first, or without fail.

5. *Set due dates*

Establish dates for completion of each action, based on the priorities.

6. *Assign responsibilities*

Assign a person or group the responsibility for each action. In each case, verify that the assignment has been accepted and be prepared to follow-up on the follow-through.

7. *Estimate the cost*

Cost includes hours of effort (how many people are needed for how long) as well as money for materials and other requirements.

8. *Choose what you can afford*

"Strategic" planning allows you to choose levels of effort, based on what you can afford or are staffed to handle. Under each action plan, identify a minimum, medium, and maximum level of effort (people and time) and funds (money) that will still achieve the goal. As an example, your objective is to acquire for the coming year's education program at least two of the "recommended resources" for each age group:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
10 books @$ 00	25 books @$ 000	50 books @$ 000
1 video @ 00	2 videos @ 00	3 videos @ 00
Total $ 00	$ 00	$ 000
People 1 (1 hr.)	1 (1-1/2 hrs.)	1 (2 hrs.)

Circle the level of effort you choose for the coming year. Add the costs of all the circled items to estimate the total cost of your choices. If this total is more than you anticipated in income and/or people hours available, go back and place the circles around a lower level of effort, or hold back on lower priority actions for another year.

9. *Be adaptable*

Don't be afraid to make changes. Adjust your plans during the year when new situations or considerations call for a change of priorities or actions. Planning should be a continuous process.

Step 9: *Carry Out the Plan*

Get organized for action.

1. *Write procedures*

   Be consistent. Begin now to keep a procedures manual or desk book for use of the staff. Keep a record of the procedures for activities, such as ordering materials, classifying and cataloging, circulating, etc. Suggestions may be found in *Cataloging Made Easy* (CSLA Guide No. 5) and *A Policy and Procedure Manual for Church and Synagogue Libraries* (CSLA Guide No. 9).

2. *Establish a work schedule*

   Some libraries set aside one morning a week for staff to work on the collection. Even if much of this work is done at other times, it is good to get the staff together regularly to compare notes. The staff needs to work as a team.

3. *Keep records*

   Keep track of materials added to the collection, the number of items that circulate, the kinds of questions that users ask, etc. These records help you evaluate your library services, make plans for another year, and report to your sponsoring organization about library activities.

Step 10: *Provide for Continuity*

Each year is a new beginning. But each new year also is based on the past.

1. *Prepare reports*

   At least annually, prepare a report about library activities. Measure how well you are doing in meeting objectives. Include numbers (totals, percentages, and/or ratios) and examples of successful services.

2. *Present reports to sponsors*

   A sponsor is anyone who provides funding or guidance. This tends to insure continued support. Also, give copies to your minister or rabbi.

3. *Draw up new program plans*

   Update the old plan. Revise it to make plans for the coming year. Use the annual report to determine what still needs to be done. Establish new priorities and recommend new levels of effort for the coming year (with an estimate of the cost). This will be an annual cycle, to be repeated every year.

4. *Make evaluation continuous*

   Always keep abreast of what is going on and how well the library is fulfilling the needs of the congregation. Unexpected developments might call for a change - a turnover in library staff, a new study program, or a surprise bequest of memorial funds. Planning is continuous.

Step 11: *Stretch Your Horizons*

The library's mission can be broad enough to reach out beyond your own congregation. The following are examples of outreach suggested by other congregational librarians:

1. *Interact with the neighborhood*

   Open your events, such as book reviews, to the public. Borrow collections of materials from the public library, perhaps for Vacation Bible School. In return, offer to make your special collections available to their patrons - for reference in your library or interlibrary loan.

2. *Reach out to other congregational libraries*

   Get to know other congregational librarians in your area. Join the Church and Synagogue Library Association and take part in a local chapter, if there is one in your area. Read about other church and synagogue library activities in magazines and keep up with what's new. Look into networking electronically.

3. *Learn from professional librarians*

   Visit other libraries. Programs used successfully in school or public libraries can be adapted for use in congregational libraries. By stretching your horizons you keep the library alive and growing.

4. *Dare to dream*

   Big ideas come from God. Keep an open mind and heart to God's will and be grateful for God's help. When God is your partner, all you need is vision, enthusiasm, and persistence. Believe wholeheartedly that wonderful things will happen - and they will!

PLANNING WORKSHEET

Prepare a planning worksheet for each goal:

Goal: (check one)

[ ] Locate and equip library [ ] Develop staff

[ ] Select and acquire resources [ ] Promote library

[ ] Catalog and maintain collection [ ] Other _____

[ ] Operate library services _____

Objective: (what and when)

_____

Action plan: (how and who)

Action:

_____

Responsibility:_____ Due date: _____

Action:

_____

Responsibility:_____ Due date: _____

Action:

_____

Responsibility: _____ Due date: _____

Church and Synagogue Library Association Publications

Guides

No. 1 Setting Up a Library: How to Begin or Begin Again, by Ruth S. Smith. Rev. ed. 1994. 20 p. $7; members, $5.50.

No. 2 Promotion Planning Year 'Round. Rev. 2nd ed. by Claudia Hannaford and Ruth S. Smith. 52 p. illus. $6; members, $4.75.

No. 3 Workshop Planning, by Ruth S. Smith. Rev. ed. 65 p. illus. $8; members, $6.25.

No. 4 Selecting Library Materials, by Arthur W. Swarthout. 3rd Rev. ed. 16 p. $4.75; members, $3.50.

No. 5 Cataloging Made Easy, by Ruth S. Smith. 40 p. illus. index. $8.25; members, $6.50.

No. 6 Standards for Church and Synagogue Libraries: Guidelines for Measuring Effectiveness and Progress. 1993. 20 p. $7; members, $5.50.

No. 7 Classifying Church or Synagogue Library Materials, by Dorothy B. Kersten. Rev. 2nd ed. 20 p. $6; members $4.75.

No. 8 Subject Headings for Church and Synagogue Libraries, by Dorothy B. Kersten. Rev. 2nd ed. 48 p. $8.25; members, $6.50.

No. 9 A Policy and Procedure Manual for Church and Synagogue Libraries: A Do-It-Yourself Guide, by G. Martin Ruoss and Joyce Allen. Rev 2nd ed. available fall, 1994. 14 p. $7; members, $5.50.

No. 10 Archives in the Church or Synagogue Library, by Evelyn R. Ling.24 p. $6; members, $4.75.

No. 11 Planning Bulletin Boards for Church and Synagogue Libraries, by Janelle A. Paris. 48 p. illus. $8.25; members, $6.50.

No. 12 Getting the Books Off the Shelves: Making the Most of Your Congregation's Library, by Ruth S. Smith. Rev. ed. 40 p. $9; members, $7.25.

No. 13 The ABC's of Financing the Church and Synagogue Library: Acquiring Funds, Budgeting, Cash Accounting, by Claudia Hannaford. 36 p. $7.25; members, $5.75.

No. 14 Recruiting and Training Volunteers for Church and Synagogue Libraries, by Lorraine E. Burson.32 p. illus. charts. Bibliography. $7.25; members, $5.75.

No. 15 Providing Reference Service in Church and Synagogue Libraries, by Jennifer Pritchett. 60 p. Bibliography. $8.25; members, $6.50.

No. 16 The Bible in Church and Synagogue Libraries, by William H. Gentz. 26 p. $7.25; members, $5.75.

Bibliographies

Church and Synagogue Library Resources. 5th Rev. ed. by Dorothy Rodda. 24 p. $6; members, $4.75.

A Basic Book List for Church Libraries, by Bernard E. Deitrick. 4th Rev. ed. 16 p. $6; members, $4.75.

Helping Children Through Books: A Selected Booklist, by Patricia Pearl. Rev. 3rd ed. 24 p. $7.25; members, $5.75.

Religious Books for Children: An Annotated Bibliography, by Patricia Pearl. Rev. ed. 40 p. $8.25; members, $6.50.

Books For Teens, Stressing the Higher Values, by Edith S. Tyson. 1993. 30 p. $8.25; members, $6.50.

Tracts

The Congregational Family uses the Library. Rev. ed. 1993. 4 p. illus.

The Teacher and the Library - Partners in Religious Education. Rev. 4 p. illus.

Cost: 15 cents per copy; $2.50/25; $4.50/50; $8.50/100.